Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 06540 061818Z

44
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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O 061635Z MAY 75
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 945

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6540

E.O. 11652: ADS, DECLAS 6/4/75
TAGS: OVIP (PRESIDENT FORD), IT
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO ROME, IV: PROPOSED TOAST

REF: (A) STATE 103235; (B) ROME 6530

PROPOSED TOAST:

"MR. PRESIDENT, MR. PRIME MINISTER, EXCELLENCIES---

"LAST SEPTEMBER, DURING THE PRESIDENT'S USEFUL AND SUCCESSFUL STATE VISIT TO WASHINGTON, I WAS VERY PLEASED TO ACCEPT HIS KIND INVITATION TO VISIT ITALY. AFTER THIS MARVELOUS LUNCHEON BANQUET IN THE MAGNIFICENT SPLENDOR OF THIS HISTORIC PLACE, I MUST ONLY QUESTION WHY IT HAS TAKEN ME EIGHT MONTHS TO GET HERE.

"I RECALL WITH FOND MEMORIES YOUR VISIT, MR. PRESIDENT, AND THAT OF YOUR BEAUTIFUL AND GRACIOUS WIFE. IT WAS THE FIRST VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF MY PRESIDENCY BY A EUROPEAN HEAD OF STATE. IT SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISING THEN WHY I COME TO ITALY DURING MY FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO EUROPE AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

"I AM NOT UNMINDFUL OF THE SYMBOLISM WHICH THESE "FIRST" OF A KIND VISITS REPRESENT. AND I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE IN THE ETERNAL CITY TODAY AND TO REEMPHASIZE THE VERY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS EXISTED BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AS IS SO WELL ILLUSTRATED BY OUR
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ROME 06540 061818Z

MOST RECENT EXCHANGE OF VISITS.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

"WE IN AMERICA HAVE JUST BEGUN OUR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION COMMENORATING THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE. AMONG THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTORS TO OUR EARLY HISTORY ARE WILLIAM PACA, A SIGNATOR OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND FILLIPO MAZZEI, A CLOSE FRIEND AND COLLABORATOR OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. THROUGH THE CENTURIES, THE TIES OF BLOOD FROM ITALY TO THE UNITED STATES HAVE ENRICHED AMERICA'S LIFE AND CULTURE AND ESTABLISHED THE BASIS FOR THE SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP THAT EXISTS TODAY.

"THIS IS BUT ONE REASON WHY AMERICAN LEADERS WHO TRAVEL TO ITALY NEVER FEEL THAT THEY ARE IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY. ONE ALWAYS ENJOYS BEING AMONG FRIENDS AND I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE. OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHARE SO MUCH IN COMMON:

-- OUR GOVERNMENTS ARE COMMITTED TO A WORLD OF PEACE AND THE OVERCOMING OF TENSIONS WHICH THREATEN THAT PEACE

-- WE SHARE A COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND THE PRINCIPALS OF FREEDOM AND LIBERTY

-- WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE STRENGTH OF AN ALLIANCE THAT HAS BEEN INDISPENSABLE IN THE THIRTY YEARS OF UNINTERRUPTED PEACE ON THE CONTINENT AND WHICH IS INDISPENSABLE TO OUR COMMON POLICIES OF DETENTE

-- OUR CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, FRATERNAL, INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL TIES ASSURE OUR CONTINUED COOPERATION AND CLOSE ASSOCIATION.

"WE IN AMERICA GREATLY APPRECIATE ITALY'S WORLD ROLE:

-- YOUR IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO NATO

-- YOUR EFFORTS TOWARD A EUROPEAN UNION, A POLICY WHICH HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

-- THE POSITIVE AND PROMINENT ROLE YOU PLAY FOR PEACE IN THE MID-EAST AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

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-- OUR ETERNAL INDEBTEDNESS FOR YOUR MONUMENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR WESTERN CIVILIZATION.

"WE IN AMERICA ARE AWARE OF ITALY'S DIFFICULTIES AS WE IN AMERICA SHARE YOUR PROBLEMS OF INFLATION, ECONOMIC DOWN TURN, ETC. WE GREATLY ADMIRE THE COURAGE AND DETERMINATION OF YOUR GOVERNMENT AND YOUR PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE DIFFICULT BUT NECESSARY ECONOMIC MEASURES CRUCIAL IN FIGHTING THESE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. WE ARE KEENLY AWARE OF ITALY'S STRENGTHS, THE GREATEST OF WHICH ARE THE ITALIAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. WE APPRECIATE OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH ITALY AND WANT TO NOURISH IT. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH YOU AND TAKE CONFIDENCE IN THE FACT THAT THIS FRIENDSHIP IS RECIPROCATED BY SUCH A TRUSTED ALLY. IT IS WITH A WARM AND SPECIAL FEELING FOR YOUR COUNTRY THAT I PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY AND THE EVERLASTING FRIENDSHIP OF AMERICA AND ITALY." VOLPE

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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